



Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands Says “Hafa Adai” (Hello) to New Commemorative Quarter-Dollar Coin

December 9, 2009

GARAPAN, Saipan, Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands — Citizens of the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands rallied today in American Memorial Park, to welcome the new commemorative quarter-dollar struck in honor of the U.S. territory.

“The design chosen for the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands quarter-dollar coin reflects the islands’ native culture, natural resources and warm hospitality,” United States Mint Deputy Director Andy Brunhart said.

Brunhart and Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands Governor Benigno R. Fitial hosted the ceremony that included cultural performances by local groups. Following the ceremony, Brunhart and the Governor handed out new Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands quarter-dollars to children 18 years old and younger, while attendees exchanged their currency for \$10 rolls of the new quarters.

On the eve of the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands quarter launch, Brunhart hosted a collector’s coin forum at the American Memorial Park Visitor’s Center, where he discussed United States Mint programs with members of the audience. Audience members shared their ideas about what they would like to see on U.S. coinage in the future.

The Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands commemorative quarter-dollar is the sixth and final coin in the United States Mint 2009 District of Columbia and U.S. Territories Quarters Program. The coin’s reverse (tails side)—designed by United States Mint Artistic Infusion Program Master Designer Richard Masters and sculpted by United States Mint Sculptor-Engraver Phebe Hemphill—represents the wealth of the islands in their natural resources. Near the shore stands a large limestone latte, the supporting column of ancient indigenous Chamorro structures. A canoe of the indigenous Carolinians represents the people’s seafaring skills across vast distances. Two white fairy tern birds fly in characteristic synchrony overhead. A Carolinian mwar (head lei) composed of plumeria, langilang (Ylang Ylang), angagha (peacock flower) and teibwo (Pacific Basil) borders the bottom of the design near the inscription NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS. The mwar is symbolic of the virtues of honor and respect.

A digital image of the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands quarter is available at <http://www.usmint.gov/pressroom/index.cfm?action=Photo#2009DCTerri>.

The United States Mint released the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands quarter to the Federal Reserve Bank on November 30. At noon Eastern time the same day, the agency also opened sales for bags of 100 and 1,000 coins of Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands quarters, as well as two-roll sets (40 coins per roll) containing one roll each from the United States Mint facilities at Philadelphia and Denver. To place an order, visit the United States Mint Web site at <http://www.usmint.gov/catalog> or call 1-800-USA-MINT (872-6468). Hearing- and speech-impaired customers with TTY equipment may order by calling 1-888-321-MINT (6468). The two-roll sets and 100-coin bags are \$32.95 each, and the 1,000-coin bags are \$309.95 each.

Free United States Mint lesson plans about the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands quarter may be downloaded at <http://www.usmint.gov/kids>.

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